

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6180

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

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AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, EFIN, PFOR, EG, KU

SUBJ: MINISTER OF FINANCE ATEEQI REACTS TO EGYPTIAN CRITICISM

1. STUNG BY MUSA SABRI'S CRITICISM IN AL-AKHBAR, KUWAIT FINANCE MINISTER ATEEQI REACTED STRONGLY IN A SEPTEMBER 2 INTERVIEW IN NOW SUPPRESSED DAILY AL-HADAF. ATEEQI ASKS WHY HE IS BEING "HUNTED" BY SABRI, CALLS SABRI'S ATTACK "OUTRAGEOUS" AND ASKS WHY KUWAIT IS BEING SELECTED FOR CRITICISM, WHEN GULF ORGANIZATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EGYPT (GODE) ALSO INCLUDES SAUDI ARABIA, UAE, AND QATAR. ATEEQI ACCUSES EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF FINANCE OFFICIALS OF LEAKING HALF-TRUTHS TO SABRI, OF "DEFAMING KUWAIT AND KUWAIT'S MINISTER OF FINANCE" AND THREATENS TO REVEAL THE FULL MINUTES OF MEETINGS ON GODE. THIS, ATEEQI SAYS, "WILL DISGRACE THOSE WITH CORRUPT CONSCIENCES AND CHEAP PENS." GODE IS FOR FINANCING PROJECTS AND JOINT VENTURES, AND ITS LEGAL CHARTER, ATEEQI CONTINUES, SHOULD NOT BE AMENDED TO BE "BURDENED WITH NEW COMMITMENTS." MINISTER QUOTED AS SAYING "I ASSURE YOU THAT THE DESIRE OF PRESIDENT SADAT FOR ENCOURAGING ARAB INVESTMENTS AND ATTRACTING THEM TO EGYPT AND THE POLICY OF ECONOMIC 'OPENING' ...ARE BEING HINDERED AND BOGGED DOWN BY (CERTAIN PERSONS) IN CAIRO." IF

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ATTACKS ON KUWAIT AND HIMSELF GO ON, ATEEQI CONCLUDES, HE WILL

REVEAL "DOCUMENTS WHICH IF DISCLOSED WILL NOT PLEASE THOSE WHO ARE SICK IN HEART AND WHO ARE DISPLEASED BY THE SUCCESS OF SUPPORTING THE EGYPTIAN ECONOMY AND THE INVESTMENTS IN EGYPT."

2. COMMENT: DRAGGING DISCUSSION OF GODE DOWN TO LEVEL OF TYPICAL INTER-ARAB POLITICAL SPAT IS UNFORTUNATE. PERSONAL OFFENSE ATEEQI HAS TAKEN AND BITTERNESS OF HIS WORDS ARE SURPRISING, EVEN GIVEN HIS PAST RECORD OF STRONG STATEMENTS IN PUBLIC. TIMING OF SABRI ARTICLE, WHILE NEW KUWAITI CABINET BEING FORMED AND RUMORS OF ATEEQI'S DEPARTURE CIRCULATING, PROBABLY EXPLAIN GOOD DEAL OF HIS SHARP REACTION.

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